

YAMNOTRI-GANGOTRI

KEDAR-BADRI

YATRA GUIDE



The Call of Uttrakhand

In the Glorious Temple of Nature Maya-Steeped in sublime beauty of the Himalaya Enshrined on the Ho River's shore-God incarnated glorifies the glories yore.

With silver domes of lofty mountains glittering all round,

*Amidst radiant glow of Golden Peaks of the dawn
Falls and Brooks, rills and rivers flowing leaps and bound,*

*Kinnas & Gods singing his Glories with nature
amusing sound.*

YAMNOTRI-GANGOTRI KEDAR-BADRI

Yatra Guide

(WITH PICTURES & GUIDE MAP)

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Preface — SWAMI SHIVANAND SARASWATI .

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DISTANCE & FARE TABLE FOR TOURS

From Various Stations of UTTARAKHAND

<i>Names of Shrines, Places</i>	<i>Distance in km.</i>	<i>Fare per seat Aprox.</i>
Haridwar to Badrinath	333	75.00
Haridwar to Gaurikund	247	60.00
Haridwar to Hanumanchatti	252	60.00
Haridwar to Gangotri	295	72.00
Haridwar to Govindghat	307	71.00
Haridwar to Deoli	59	15.00
Haridwar to Nainital	217	51.00
Rishikesh to Badrinath	301	70.00
Rishikesh to Gaurikund	216	53.00
Rishikesh to Hanumanchatti	220	53.00
Rishikesh to Gangotri	260	65.00
Rishikesh to Govindghat	275	65.00
Rishikesh to Deoli	35	10.00
Kotdwara to Badrinath	328	75.00
Kotdwara to Gaurikund	242	57.00
Kotdwara to Govindghat	302	70.00
Ramnagar to Badrinath	337	78.00
Ramnagar to Gaurikund	317	75.00
Ramnagar to Govindghat	311	72.00
Hanumanchatti to Gangotri	222	52.00
Hanumanchatti to Gaurikund	300	70.00
Hanumanchatti to Badrinath	348	87.00
Gangotri to Gaurikund	349	81.00
Gangotri to Badrinath	433	100.00
Gaurikund to Badrinath	233	56.00

HEIGHTS OF SOME IMPORTANT PLACES

1. Badrinath	10350 ft.
2. Kedarnath	11750 ft.
3. Ukhimath	4500 ft.
4. Triyuginarayan	6000 ft.
5. Rambara	9000 ft.
6. Gaurikund	6500 ft.
7. Madmaheshwar	11474 ft.
8. Tungnath	12070 ft.
9. Rudranath	11670 ft.
10. Ansuyadevi	6500 ft.
11. Hanumanchatti	8000 ft.
12. Roopkund	16000 ft.
13. Chandravadni	8000 ft.
14. Surkunda Devi	8000 ft.
15. Dudhatoli	12300 ft.
16. Hemkund (Lokpal)	14300 ft.
17. Gangotri	10300 ft.
18. Yamnotri	10500 ft.
19. Pauri (Garhwal)	5500 ft.
20. Lansdon	5600 ft.
21. Vasudhara	12000 ft.
22. Joshimath	6150 ft.
23. Uttarkashi	3500 ft.
24. Gaumukh	12770 ft.
25. Vaidini	12000 ft.
26. Vasudhara Falls	13000 ft.
27. Pandukeshwar	6450 ft.

**CHAR DHAM Bus Service From Risikesh
(G.M.O., T.G.M.O.; YATAYAT)**

Rishikesh to Hanumanchatti	209 km.
Hanumanchatti to Gangotri	215 km.
Gangotri to Gaurikund	334 km.
Gaurikund to Badrinath	229 km.
Rishikesh to Gaurikund	209 km.
Badrinath to Rishikesh	301 km.

Journey By Private Ambassador Car

<i>Journey</i>	<i>Days</i>	<i>Seats</i>	<i>Aproxi- mate Exp.</i>
Hardwar to Badrinath	3 Days	5	Rs. 2000
Hardwar to Kedar-Badri	5 Days	5	Rs. 3000
Hardwar to Charodham	10-11 days	5	Rs. 5000
Extra days Rs. 200/- per day. Local Taxes Extra.			

Horse/Pony

<i>Journey</i>	<i>km.</i>	<i>Horse</i>	<i>Pony</i>
Hanumanchatti to Yamunotri			
to Hanumanchatti	26 km.	Rs. 200	Rs. 500
Gurikund-Kedar-Gaurikund	28 km.	Rs. 200	Rs. 500
Govindghat to Ghangaria	15 km.		
Ghangaria to Hemkund	5 km.	Rs. 200	Rs. 500
Ghangaria to Phoolon-ki-ghat	5 km.	Per day	Per day

HIMALAYAN SHRINES

PANCH BADRI :

Adi-Badri : On Rishikesh Ramnagar Motor Road, 18 km. from Karan Prayag.

Vridha Badri : At Animath on Pipalkoti Joshimath Motor Road.

Bhavishya Badri : At Subhain beyond Tapovan about 15 km. from Joshimath.

Yog Badri : At Pandukeshwar 24 km. from Joshimath.

Badrinarayan or Badri Vishal : 301 km. from Rishikesh.

PANCH KEDAR :

Sri Kedarnath : 14 km. from Gaurikund.

Madhya Maheshwar : 25 km. from Nala Chatti.

Tung Nath : 5 km. from Chopta.

Rudra Nath : 28 km. from Mandal Chatti.

Kalpeshwar : 9 km. from Helang.

PANCH PRAYAGS :

Deoprayag : 93 km. from Hardwar—Sangam of Bhagirathi & Alaknanda.

Rudraprayag : 71 km. from Deoprayag—Sangam of Alaknanda & Mandakini.

Karanprayag : 34 km. from Rudraprayag—Sangam of Pindar & Alaknanda.

Nandprayag : 21 km. from Karanprayag—Sangam of Nandakini & Alaknanda.

Vishnuprayag : 10 km. from Joshimath—Sangam of Dhauli Ganga & Alaknanda.

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The Urge of the Pilgrimage

By—N. Singh

Since the man separated himself from the animals, learned culture and graduated himself as a rational-being, he freed himself from the struggle for the bare necessities of life. It was when he was at ease with his belly full that his mind began to work. He searched for the peace of mind. Thus his struggle for the spiritual goal began, which still continues. This urge gave birth to several seers and sages in all parts of the world, but, as India could yield better ease and comfort to the man, the sacred quest was the deepest here. Every man and woman in India seems to be a philosopher, who thinks himself fully able to discuss and comment on the problems of wisdom.

To fulfil this goal of self realisation, pursuit for Moksha—the eternal peace after death, the Indian sages and wise established during pre-historic ages, four shrines of God—Four Dharmas viz. Puri-Jagan Nath, Rameshwaram, Dwarka and Badrinath, as they are generally known at the four corners of the country.

The order to visit these four shrines may differ from person to person, according to their belief. Some people prefer to visit the first three Dharmas, before they go to Badrinath. Others give importance to visit

Badri-Nath Dham before they proceed for others and take holy waters of the Ganges from Gangotri with them to Rameshwar for shiv-linga bath. Now it is obvious that to visit other 3 shrines was easier as compared to the fourth one—that is Badrinath—some 10 years before due to railways and motor-routes. Since the routes to Badrinath were more dangerous and there was certainly a great risk for the lives of the visitors, this was always put on the fourth number. But at present the motor bus has reached the destination and this journey has also become easier than before. Badrinath Dham is in north, with great religious importance attached to it. The pilgrimage is termed as Uttrakhand-Yatra, which includes the pilgrimage to Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri, Yamunotri and even to Kailash and Mansarovara. To enter this region of sublime atmosphere and super natural beauty of the Himalayas there are several routes, say via Kotdwara, Kathgodam, Almora etc. But the main route is via Hardwar which is said to be the Gateway to Gods. As the faithful and righteous soul proceeds further higher and higher through the Himalayas, he seems to be getting nearer and nearer to God, shedding off the worldly bondages one by one.

Although, the pilgrim has to pass through narrow passages, steep heights and slippery Paths through rains and snow, but he feels cheerful and pleased in the thin air and clean atmosphere of the Himalays. This is either due to his faith or unearthly peace of mind that the atmosphere around creates in him. However, the faithful devotee obtains full return in clearing himself from his sins and rises to spiritual heights and last obtains Moksha.

Shri Badrinath Dham

The holy abode of Shri Badrinath ji is situated in north, on the Himalayan hills. The region has been termed as 'UTTRAKHAND' in Indian mythological books, with religious importance attached to it. From the times immemorial, this land has been the abode of seers, saints, yogies rishies and maharishies. Many important characters, from the ancient history are said to have visited this place to attain eternal-peace in their lives through meditation. Therefore, the land is known as TAPOBHUMI—the land for meditation and penance. It is also termed as BHUBAIKUNTH—The Heaven of the earth.

Himalayas

The Abode of seers and sages

By—Swami Shiva Nand

(Late president of Divine Life Society at Rishikesh)

Though Kashi-Yatra is popular because of the sanctity of 'Lord Vishwanathas' Holy Shrine situated in easily accessible Benaras on the plains, Kailas Yatra is just as popular, inspite of the difficulties of pilgrimage, because of the supreme sanctity attached to the Himalayan Centres of pilgrimage. It is the pious wish of every true Indian—the truly religious Indian—to make a pilgrimage to Badrinath Dham.

At great expense and greater personal risk, thousands of Indians from all over the country have paid their heart's homage year after year to the Lord Badri Narayan, even when travel in the Himalayan regions was difficult and dangerous. Indeed, life itself was considered insignificant before a chance to lay one's head on the dust of holy Badrinath. Since the day on which (according to Srimad Bhagavata) Lord Krishna commanded his disciple Uddhava to go to Badrikashrama and contemplate on Him—if not from earlier days—people have gone on pilgrimage to this Holy Shrine.

It is often asked how they have benefitted by such an

arduous pilgrimage. The answer must spring from the heart of pilgrim himself. Spiritual benefit always depends on the heart and its faith—the faith that is the very life-breath of the spirit of man—and that faith without which no spiritual achievement is possible. If a pilgrim heartily believes & is convinced and certain that all his sins will be washed away, that he will attain moksha and get beyond the wheel of Samsara, there is absolutely no reason why it should not prove to be so. Badri Yatra or Uttarakhand pilgrimages can wash off all sins and enable one to get strides towards the Great Goal—self realisation—if one has a firm faith in its glory. But, it is to be remembered that test of this faith is on return from such a pilgrimage. If after the pilgrimage, it is proved that there has been a thorough purge of sins, that all the evil Samskaras have been washed away by the holy waters of the river, that the pilgrim is filled with the spiritual vibrations of the sublime atmosphere he has sojourned in and that he can live a pure life of righteousness, devotion, truth, love and purity, then he has certainly been liberated and the pilgrimage has served its supreme purpose. Some pilgrims—though their number may be small—do rise to such spiritual heights.

Hymns

(In praise of Shri Badrinath Ji)

*Pawan Mand Sugandh Sheetal,
Hem Mandir Shobhitam.
Nikat Ganga Bahat Nirmala,
Shri Badrinath Vishwambharam.*

O'Lord of whole world! you are adorned by the temple of snow, situated by the side of sacred Ganges, with the cool breeze and whiff around it.

*Shesh Sumirana Karat Nishidin,
Dharat Dhyan Maheshwaram.
Ved Brahma Karat Stuti,
Shri Badrinath Vishwambharam.*

The Lord of this world—Shri Badrinath ji—is being prayed day and night by 'SHESHNAG'—the lord of snakes. Shri Shiv Shankar (the lord of lords) even, sits in His meditation. Ved & Brahma (the god of creation) are always singing hymns in his praise.

*Shakti Gauri Ganesh Sharad,
Narad Muni Ucharanam.
Yog Dhyan Apaar Leela,
Shri Badrinath Vishwambharam.*

— Shakti (the goddess of power), Gauri (holy goddess, the wife of Lord Shiva), Ganesh (the god to be worshipped first of all), Sharad (the god of music) and the saint Narad are always uttering in His praise. O'lord of whole world, all these holy-characters are worshipping and meditating upon your name.

ping and meditating upon your name.

*Indra Chandra Kuber Dinkar,
Dhoop Deep Prakashitam.
Siddh Munijan Karat Jai Jai,
Shri Badrinath Vishawambharm.*

Lord Shri Badrinath ji is incensed and enlightened by-Indra (the lord of atmosphere), Chandra (the Moon), Kuber (the lord of atmosphere), Chandra (the Moon), Kuber (the lord of wealth), Dinkar (the Sun), Seers and Sages are always singing His victory.

*Yaksha Kinnar Karat Kautuk,
Gyan Gandharva Prakashitam.
Shrilakshmi Kamla Chanwar Dolen,
Shri Badrinath Vishawambharm.*

Yakshas Kinnaras (two heavenly races, whose profession is to dance and sing to please the gods) are showing their novelties and Gandharvas are displaying knowledge before you. Shri Lakshmi-Kamla (the holy wife of Lord Vishnu—the lord of whole Universe) is flapping CHANWAR (a flapper made of the tale of wild ox) on your head.

*Shri Badrinath Ki Paralit Stuti,
Haot Pap Vinashanam.
Koti Tirtha Bhayo Punya,
Prapt Yeh Phaladayakam.*

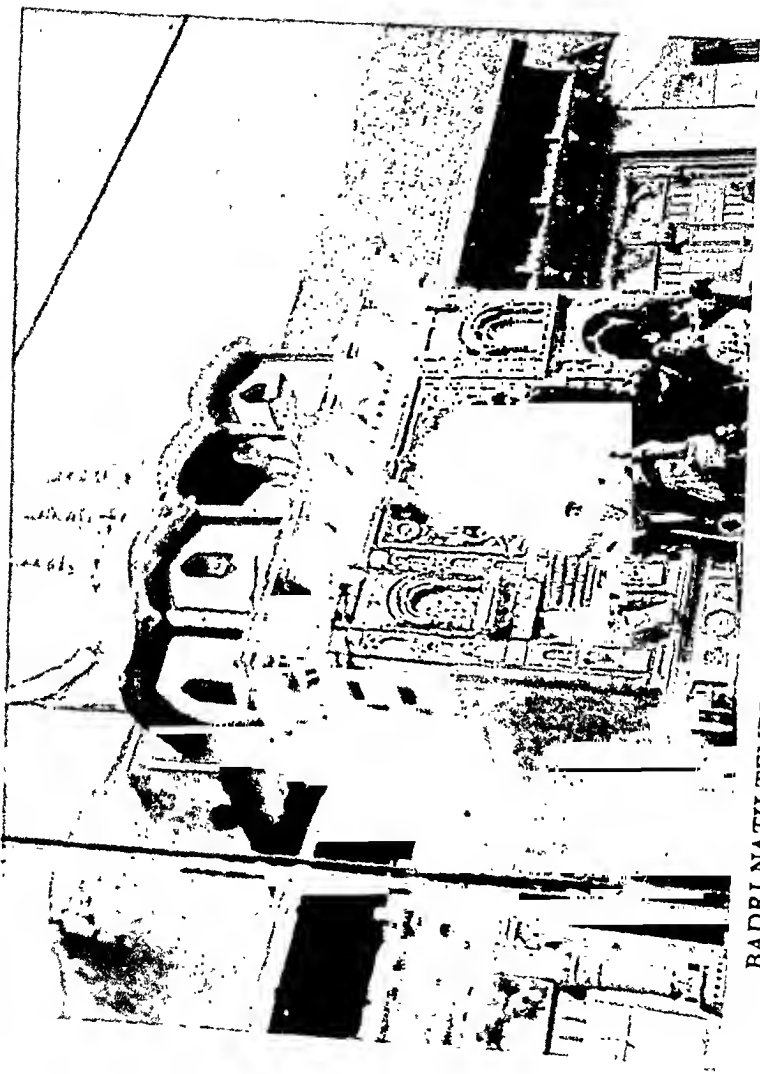
One can get free of all sins, if he reads these hymns of Shri Badrinath ji. The spiritual gain, which one attains to read these holy-verses, is equal to the pilgrimages of crores of holy-spots in this world.

The Holy Importance of Shri Badrinath Ji

“O Lord” said Arundhati ji to her husband, “please let me know the holy importance of shri Badrinath; which is of my liking and beneficial for the people also. I think this was related to Parvati ji by her husband the lord of lords, lord Shiva. How big is that Badrinath and what are the gains, if visited by anyone with pure and holy heart? Please let me know all this in details.”

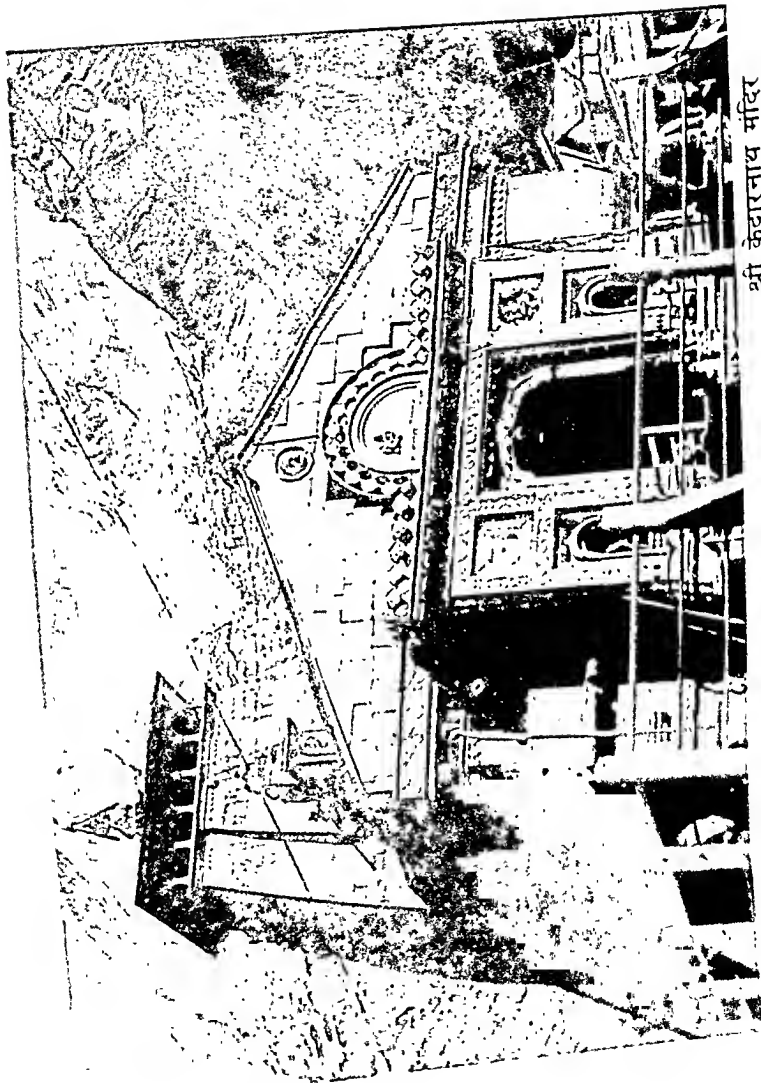
The above discussion was being related to the saint Shaunak by Shri Soot ji—a holy mendicant of the Indian mythology; and that narration continues—Soot ji told the Shaunak that listening to the words of his wife Arundhati, Muni Vashishtha ji concentrated his mind for a moment and said—

‘O’ beloved! even if a person who is full of sins & happens to get a holy sight of shri Badrinath ji, he becomes free of wordly bondages and secures a seat in heaven for himself. But, at the same time, it is not so easy to get that holy sight. Only that person will get the holy sight of shri Badrinath ji who had prayed the Almighty throughout his one hundred births unto this earth and one, who gets the holy sight of lord Badrinath ji from His diadem to the holyfeet, is entitled for Moksha—an eternal stage of peace and happiness—after getting free from the earthly bondages. One, who utters ‘Badrinath’ by chance in his life, all his sins are purified. One, who is guilty of the crime of highest degree and



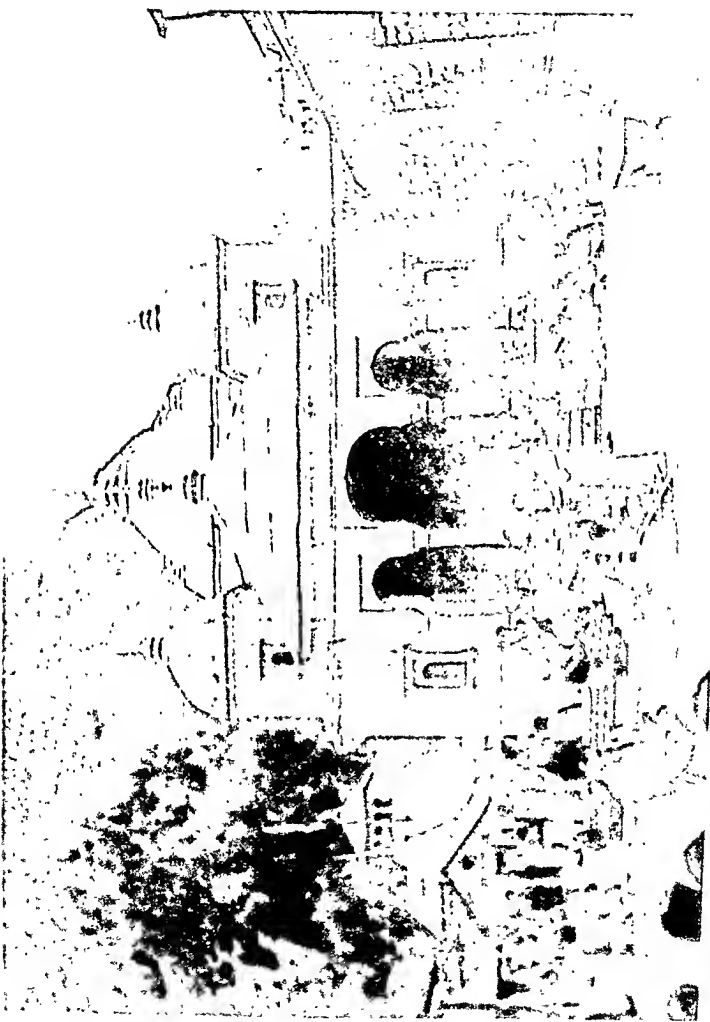
BADRI NATH TEMPLE

श्री बद्रीनाथ मंदिर



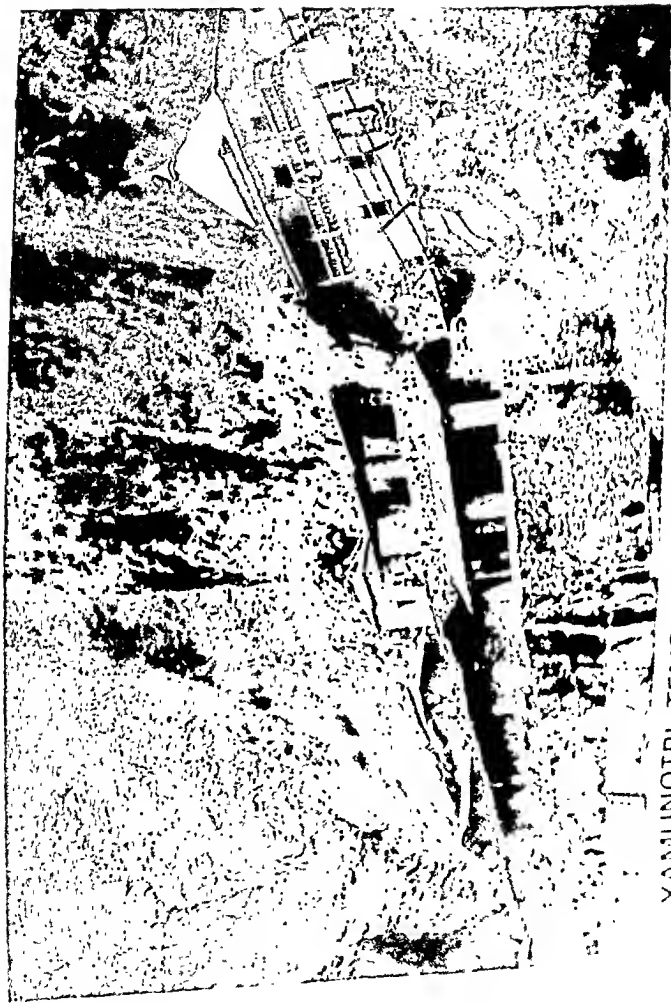
KEDAR NATH TEMPLE

श्री केदारनाथ मंदिर



SHREE GANGOTRI TEMPLE

श्री गंगोत्री मंदिर

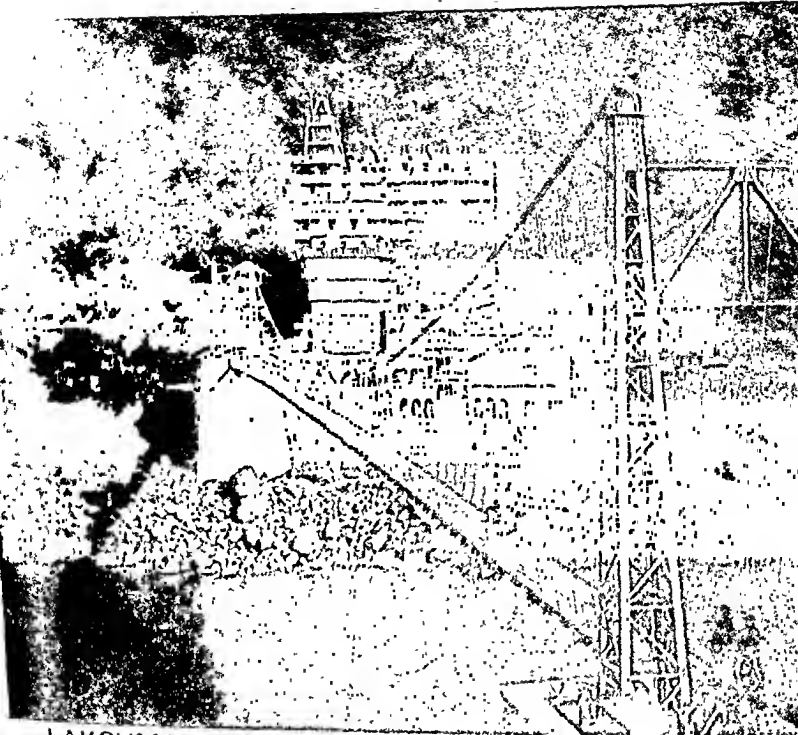


YAMUNOTRI TEMPLE

यमुनोत्री मंदिर



Shree Badrish Panchayat श्री बदरीश पंचायत



LAKSHMAN JHULA

लक्ष्मण





रुद्र प्रयाग Rudra Prayag

could not get free of his sins at any other place, may come here and he will get his sins purified in a moment. Anyone who presents wearing apparels and ornaments to shri Badrinath ji, after offering bath to his holy idol with the sacred waters from the five-holy places, is said to have a seat in heavens, after completing his life.

‘O’ Arundhati! whoever offers a handful of ‘Naivedya’—(offerings of food to the god) deserves a kingdom, and those, who offer ‘Akhand Deep’ to shri Badrinath ji, are thought to be the fortunate people. As there is no other god equivelant to the lord Vishnu. Similarly, no other offering can please shri Badrinathji as much as Akhand-deep (a particular shape of lamp). ‘O’ beloved Arundhati! whoever circumambulates the temple of Sri Badrinath ji becomes entitled to the benefit of offering whole-earth to a beggar and those, who go to have a sight of Badrinath ji with their hearts devoted to the lord, after having a dip in the hot-water-tank situated nearby, are worshipped by the gods with their heads bowed before them. The gods themselves tell such a person—O’ pious soul! you are getting the benefit of one Ashwamedh yajna, when they move by one step. One, who takes blessing and Charnamrit (The water with which the feet of the idol is washed mixed with offerings to the deity) of lord Badrinath ji, is blessed and fortunate and worshipped by the gods. Arundhati! lord Badrinath has the knowledge of all Vedas and can bring out from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge. Uniform, unaltered and supreme lord Vishnu reflects his own virtue in His shape. Therefore, people should lead their lives in concentration and devotion of shri Badrinath ji.

Starting Time For Badrinath Yatra

(a) The Time for "Panch-Kedar." (or Badrinath Yatra, via Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath) starting from Rishikesh, is from the 15th of April to the end of July.

(b) The time for Badri-Kedar Yatra, starting from Rishikesh is from 15th of April to the end of September.

(c) The time for Badrinath Yatra only, starting from Rishikesh, is the 25th of April to the 15th of October.

But, for those who are not very keen of being at Badrinath on the first day and who want to avoid snow and cold, for them the more convenient time to start is from the 15th of May to 15th of October.

Motor Bus Service to Badrinath & Kedarnath

According to latest informations, Roadways bus service leads a traveller direct from Haridwar to Badrinath. From Rishikesh also, the private buses are available by the following names—

1. Garhwal Motor Owners Union.
2. Yatayat Bus Service.

Tourist taxi services are also available from Haridwar as well as Rishikesh.

Those people, who desire to go to Kedar Nath, will be required to reach RYDTRAPRAYAG on bus. An another road starts from here for Kedarnath and the bus service leads a traveller upto Gaurikund. Now from here Kedarnath remains about 14 km. only which, may be accomplished on foot, dandies or on ponies.

Motor Bus Service to Yamunotri

The bus will lead you to Dharasu, and then to Hanuman Chatti 209 km. via Sayana Chatti. Yamunotri is 13 km. from here on foot.

Motor Bus Service to Gangotri

From Yamunotri you will have to come back to Hanuman Chatti on foot. From here upto Gangotri 215 km. by Bus.

Expenses

As regards the expenses on the food and clothes, it varies according to the pockets of individual. Some can afford quite luxurious food while others will hardly be able to fill their bellies. But usually the ordinary man will have to spend for simple daily food a sum of Rs. 20/- to 30/- A poor can fulfil his mission in ordinary clothes with a sum of Rs. 400/- to Rs. 500/-. The cooli is usually at the rate of Rs. 6/- to Rs. 8/- per kg. But it varies according to the rush of pilgrims. The coolies are given at least Rs. 5/- a day extra and at every tirtha they are supposed to be served with mixed rice for their meals. Moreover, if the pilgrim requires to make halt at his will, he will have to feed the coolies also, and if stays for a longer time he will have to pay them extra for the stoppage. The rates of a pony is about 200/- rupees a

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due to rush of pilgrims..

4. Lodging—(a) There are Inspection Bungalows, throughout the route to Badrinath and other holy places. Permission to use them should be obtained from the Engineer P.W.D. Pauri Garhwal U.P. or the Tehri Darbar (as the case may be) before due time.

(b) There are Dharamshalas of the Kshetra of baba Kali-Kamli-Wala at all important places, besides, there are Chatties temporary halting place consisting of huts, airy-accommodations, neat and clean), prepared by the village banias, at convenient places (generally at 4 to 10 km.) The owners of these Chatties also keep a sufficient stock of necessary cooking utensils, but they only supply to those who buy the food-stuffs from them, and at all the important places there are also the houses and Dharamshalas of the Pandas of those places.

5. Clothing—After a thorough study of this book, one can find out that there are only a few portions of the whole journey (from 6 to 10 km. of distance), near each sacred place, which are really cold and need sufficient woollen clothings, beddings and coverings etc. But it may be borne in mind that at these places there are houses of pandas, temple authorities and the dharamshalas of Kshettras and others, where blankets are supplied to the needy pilgrims. However, one should take with him all the necessary articles as per list given below, as far as possible, adopting a policy of taking the minimum number of articles in the minimum quantity, according to his status and mode of living.

List of Articles required for this Yatra

2 Blankets, 1 Dari or ordinary blanket, 1 Woollen Wrapper, 2 Chadars (sheets), 1 Raincoat, 2 sets of Shirts and Banians both woollen and cotton, 1 Woollen Sweater, 2 Towels, 1 Water-proof sheet (3 yards), 1 Hill-stick, 1 Umbrella, 1 Torch, 1 Pr. Rubber shoes, 1 small Rope, Articles of Bhenta (offerings)—Some silk cloth, Misri Chhoti ilaichi, Dhoop Agarbatti, Sandal wood, Kesar and the like.

Some dry fruits and patent medicines of daily use and other sundry articles according to your taste.

6. Cooliage—The pilgrims are requested not to deal with the coolies directly, nor should they take them without registering them, as their going in unknown areas with un-registered coolies may prove harmful to them. A few cases in the past have necessiated the establishment of a Coolies Agency after due consultations with the authorities of the districts of Dehra-doon, Saharanpur and Garhwal, under the control and supervision of the Tehri Durbar.

7. Views while Walking—One thing at a time and that is done well, is a very good rule as many can tell. So while travelling in these hills, please never try to divert your attention towards any scenery or howsoever sublime beauty, charm or attraction, as the practice may prove harmful and you may tumble down or perhaps loose your life even, unless you are borne by some comfortable conveyance.

Walk while you walk & stand while you see

8. A Remedy for Fatigue—At the end of each day's

evening hundreds of devotees attend the grand Arti performed at Har-ki-pauri. This is an emotional experience as the pilgrims gather together in an air of reverence and devotion, on the floodlit ghats of the Ganga, to offer their prayers to the Supreme Being. This ghat, Har-ki-pauri, is named after the charan or footprints of Hari (Vishnu) impressed on a stone set into the upper wall of the ghat.

The Temples of the Ganga, Shankaracharya, Nave Graha and the Baraha Khamba are near Har-Ki-Pauri. Other temples which have legendary importance are Shrawan Nath, Maya Devi, Chandi Devi, Mansa Devi is atop a hill in picturesque surroundings.

Like other religious places the pandas here can arrange accommodation, puja and sightseeing for their traditional yajmans. They keep an up-to-date record of their yajmans. So it is quite easy for visitors to see if their ancestors had made a pilgrimage to Hardwar. Some of the pandas are great pundits of the Hindu religion and philosophy and well-versed in public relations.

There is plenty of accommodation, a good market with vegetarian restaurants and shops.

PLACES WORTH VISITING

BRAHM KUND—The name of the kund at Harki Pairi is Brahma Kund. This is the place where the celestial waters are said to flow and religious minded Hindus gather from all parts of India and abroad to have a dip in it, to free themselves from the bondage of the world.

SUBHASH GHAT, GAUGHAT KUSHAVART GHAT & SHARVAN NATH GHAT—are situated to the south

of HARKI PAIRI adjoining to each other.

BHIM GODA TANK—At a distance of about 1 k m. from Harki Pairi the sacred tank is situated with the holy waters.

SAPTA SAROVER—(Sapta Rishi Ashram) 4 kms. towards the north from Harki Pairi, the Holy Ganga is bifurcated in 7 Streams Nearby the Ashram is recently made and dedicated to the 7 Rishis of Hindu mythology.

MANSA DEVI & CHANDI DEVI—The temples are situated at the top of the hills towering both sides of the city.

KANKHAL—Five kms. from Harki Pairi on the banks of Neel Dhara, the Ganges River, the town of Kank hal is situated. The place was once the capital of King Daksh the father of Parvati, who burned herself in the sacred fires of the yagya of King Daksha. This is very old place. The temple of Daksheswar Mahadeva is the Place of importance, alongwith Sati Ghat. The place has always been mentioned in old histories and Puranas.

DAKSHESWARA MAHADEVA—The old temple dedicated to Lord Shiva is situated on the banks of the Ganges, where the sacred waters of the River seem to touch the feet of the Lord. The temple is said to have been erected in commemoration of Mahadeva coming down from Kailash for the help of Goddess Sati; when Sati burned herself in the fires of the Yajna of Daksha. Lord Shiva was prayed and worshipped here by the Gods to save the life of Daksha.

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There is plenty of accommodation, a good market with vegetarian restaurants and shops.

PLACES WORTH VISITING

BRAHM KUND—The name of the kund at Harki Pairi is Brahma Kund. This is the place where the celestial waters are said to flow and religious minded Hindus gather from all parts of India and abroad to have a dip in it, to free themselves from the bondage of the world.

SUBHASH GHAT, GAUGHAT KUSHAVART GHAT & SHARVAN NATH GHAT—are situated to the south

of HARKI PAIRI adjoining to each other.

BHIM GODA TANK—At a distance of about 1 k m. from Harki Pairi the sacred tank is situated with the holy waters.

SAPTA SAROVER—(Sapta Rishi Ashram) 4 kms. towards the north from Harki Pairi, the Holy Ganga is bifurcated in 7 Streams. Nearby the Ashram is recently made and dedicated to the 7 Rishis of Hindu mythology.

MANSA DEVI & CHANDI DEVI—The temples are situated at the top of the hills towering both sides of the city.

KANKHAL—Five kms. from Harki Pairi on the banks of Neel Dhara, the Ganges River, the town of Kank hal is situated. The place was once the capital of King Daksh the father of Parvati, who burned herself in the sacred fires of the yagya of King Daksha. This is very old place. The temple of Daksheswar Mahadeva is the Place of importance, alongwith Sati Ghat. The place has always been mentioned in old histories and Puranas.

DAKSHESWARA MAHADEVA—The old temple dedicated to Lord Shiva is situated on the banks of the Ganges, where the sacred waters of the River seem to touch the feet of the Lord. The temple is said to have been erected in commemoration of Mahadeva coming down from Kailash for the help of Goddess Sati; when Sati burned herself in the fires of the Yajna of Daksha. Lord Shiva was prayed and worshipped here by the Gods to save the life of Daksha.

Devotees and pilgrims gather here in the month of Shrawan and on Shiva-Ratri festivals, to sprinkle Gangajal on Shiva Linga enshrined in the temple.

Daksha Ghat is the bathing place attached to the temple.

Rishikesh

Rishikesh is the gateway to the Kingdom of the Gods—Sri Badrinath, Sri Kedarnath, Gangotri and Yamunotri. The yatris begin their pilgrimage from here.

Known from medieval times as a holy place. Rishikesh is famous all over the world as an abode of saints and sages, and it is also a centre of ashrams and dharamshalas.

Founded in 1936, Swami Shivananda's Ashram is the Headquarters of the Divine Life Society and this is an institution of international repute. Swamiji has written numerous books on various aspects of spiritualism and he has thousands of devotees and disciples throughout the world. The ashram has temples, a meditation centre, lecture halls, a hospital and living compartments. The Yoga Vedanta Forest Academy, which is the teaching and training wing of the Society, has in its staff a group of learned and selfless monks, those are proficient in distinct type of yoga.

Sawarg Ashram & Gita Bhawan

The well known Swarg Ashram was built by Swami Atma Prakash Kali Kamli Wale and a number of devotees visit this ashram every day. The splendid buildings of Gita-Bhawan is quite near to this Ashram. In this bhawan chapters of the Bhagwat-Gita and extracts from the Ramayana have been inscribed on its walls.

Parmarth Niketan

Other important ashrams are the Parmarth Niketan

which was built by a Maharaja of Shahajahanpur & Kailash Ashram etc. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi has the Head-quarters of his Transcendental Meditation Centre at Swargashram. Swami Premvarni, Swami Ram and many more holy men have set up their ashrams here.

Most of these ashrams are charitable and benevolent religious institution. Recently some of the ashrams have extended their activities to the remote corners of Uttarakhand.

The Rishikesh Complex consists of there distinct areas known as Rishiketh, Muni-Ki-Reti and Swarghram situated along the banks of the Ganga. These three units are under separate local Bodies.

Other Places of Interest

Ramjhula : Muni Ki Reti—4 kms. from Rishikesh a newly built Jhula Bridge.

Lakshman Jhula—7 kms. A suspension bridge which was built over the Ganga in 1939.

Pushkar Temple—6 kms. Lakshman, the younger brother of Lord Rama, penanced here.

Pushkar Temple—2 kms. Newly constructed temple.

Bharat Temple—2 kms. An ancient temple is located in the centre of Rishikesh.

Rishikund and Raghunath Temple—2 kms. It is believed that Lord Rama bathed here.

Shatrughan Temple—5 kms. An ancient temple dedicated to Lord Shatrughan.

Antibiotics Project Virbhadra—7 kms. Permission to visit the plant can be obtained from the General Manager.

Rishikesh to Yamunotri

Yamunotri can be visited from Dehra Dun as well as Rishikesh, but the real atmosphere of yatra can be felt at Rishikesh alone. Whereas, car owners and parties chartering full vehicles may wish to go via Dehradun and Mussoorie, as they feel the route more interesting. Pilgrims who have to depend on public transport have no other alternative but to start the journey from Rishikesh.

RISHIKESH TO YAMUNOTRI HOW TO GET THERE

Place	Altitude (m.)	Dist. (km.) (pt. to pt.)	Dist. (km.) (progressive)
Rishikesh	340	—	—
Narendra Nagar	1067	16	16
Chamba	1524	46	62
Tehri	770	21	83
Dharasu	1036	37	120
Brahmakhal	1158	15	135
Barkot	1828	40	175
Sayanachatti	1982	29	204
Hanumanchatti	2134	5	209
Phoolchatti	2561	5	214
Jankibaichatti	2576	2	216
Yamunotri	3323	6	222
Rishikesh to Hanumanchatti		209 kms. motor	
Hanumanchatti to Yamunotri		13 kms. on foot	

WHEN TO GO : May to June and September to October

Narendra Nagar

About 2 kms. from Rishikesh at Muni-ki-Reti the road bifurcates—one road goes to Gangotri and Yamunotri and the other to Sri Kedarnath and Badrinath. This was once the capital of the old State of Tehri, and the palace of the former Maharaja, Narendra Shah of Tehri. Also most of the district offices of Tehri Garhwal are located here.

Chamba

Chamba is a delightful place with a pleasing climate during the summer months. On a clear day one can see the impressive Bandarpooch Peak and some snow on the mountain range. From Chamba a road leads to Mussoorie about 55 kms.

Dobata

Dobata is 17 kms. from Chamba and 79 kms. from Rishikesh. The roads to Uttarkashi and Srinagar meet here. The town of Tehri is 4 kms. from here.

Tehri

This romantic old capital of Tehri Garhwal was founded by Maharaja Sudarshan Shah and wonderful old palaces of the former rulers are to be found here.

Tehri is the junction of four important roads, those lead to Deoprayag, Uttarkashi, Srinagar and Tilwara. When coming from Rishikesh (83 kms. from Tehri) the road to Uttarkashi and Dharash bifurcates at Dobata 4 kms. from Tehri.

Dharasu

Dharasu is situated in the district of Uttarkashi. A road from Mussoorie (60 kms) meets here. There is a Dharamshala and Kshettra of Baba Kālī-Kamli-wala.

From this place one road goes straight to Uttarkashi 30 km.

along the bank of Bhargirathi, and the other leads to Yamnotri.

Brhmakhal

15 km. from Dharasu and 135 kms from Rishikesh. This is a small hamlet with only a few shops.

Barkot

It is from Barkot that the road to Yamunotri starts wending its way along the banks of the Yamuna, and the roads from Mussoorie and Kalsi meet here.

Note: On the Yamunotri route, Barkot is the last town where electricity is available.

Sayana Chatti

The trail from Barkot leads all along the banks of river Yamuna, through a valley of lush-vegetation and the pretty hamlets of Gangani and Kuthnaur to the halting place of Sayanachatti, some 29 km. away. It is a small busy village, nestling in the woods on the banks of the Yamuna, where the villagers from the surrounding areas come in search of seasonal work in yatra-days. Gangani is 7 km. from Barkot, and Kuthnaur is 9 km. away from Gangani.

Hanuman Chatti

This little chatti is just 5 km. from Sayanachatti and set in very beautiful surroundings. A 13 km. trek to Yamunotri starts from here. Bhepha or Kharsali is 5 km. and Yamunotri 8 km.

YAMUNOTRI

The Temple of Yamunaji is the main temple of worship. Near this temple there are a few hot water springs where the water gushes out of the mountain cavities at boiling point. Surya-Kund is the most important Kund. A pinch of rice or potatoes, tied loosely in a cloth, are dipped in it and after a few minutes when taken out completely cooked. These are taken home as prasad. Near the Surya Kund there is a shila called Dibya-Shila which is worshipped before puja is offered to Yamunaji.

Nearby is the Jamuna Bai Kund—built about 75 years ago—which is used for a holy bath. The water is pleasantly warm and relaxing.

The Pandas of Yamunotri

The pandas of Yamunotri come from the village of Kharsali, which is on the other bank of the Yamuna near jankibaichatti. The entire administration of Yamunotri is in their hands. In addition to performing their usual religious rituals, they are the pujaris of the temple.

YAMUNOTRI TO GANGOTRI HOW TO GET THERE

<i>Place</i>	<i>Altitude (m.)</i>	<i>Dist. (km.) (pt. to pt.)</i>	<i>Dist. (km.) (progressive)</i>
Yamunotri	3323	—	—
Hanumanchatti	2134	13	13 (On Foot)
Sayanachatti	1982	5	18 (Motor)
Barkot	1828	29	47 "
Dharasu	1036	55	102 "
Uttarkashi	1158	26	128 "
Gangori	1219	4	132 "
Maneri	1372	6	138 "
Bhatwari	1677	19	157 "
Gangnani	1982	14	171 "
Sukhi	2744	18	189 "
Jhala	2439	7	196 "
Harsil	2591	6	202 "
Lanka	2652	13	215 "
Bhaironghati	2652	3	218 "
Gangotri	3140	10	228 "
Yamunotri to Hanumanchatti		13 km. trek.	
Hanumanchatti to Gangotri		215 km. motor.	

WHEN TO GO : May to June and September to October

The journey from Yamunotri to Gangotri entails a journey back to Barkot, and then to Dharasu which is the bifurcating point for Yamunotri and Gangotri. At Dharasu, the main road from Rishikesh to Gangotri must be followed.

Note. For description of route Yamunotri to Barkot please refer to section—Rishikesh to Yamunotri

Dharasu

Dharasu is 120 km. from Rishikesh and 102 km. from Yamunotri.

Uttarkashi

Moving further on upto Uttarkashi, one passes along the scenic and fertile banks of the Ganga, a distance of 26 km. from the junction point Dharasu. Uttarkashi, with a population of 10,000 (approx.) is a prosperous town with modern amenities and is the Headquarters of the district of the same name. It is situated on the banks of the Ganga and is a town of historical monuments, temples, ashrams and dharmshalas.

Amongst its many temples, the Temple of Lord Vishwanath is the most important. Shiv is the presiding deity of this town and is worshipped in the morning and evening at this ancient temple.

The day of Makar Sankranti falls in the month of January and at this time a fair is held which lasts for seven days.

About a mile from Uttarkashi, at a place known as Ujali, there is a colony of sadhus and sanyasis, some of those are reputed to be scholars.

Gangotri

This is a charming village, just 4 km. from Uttarkashi and on the route to Gangotri.

Maneri

Six kilometres from Gangotri and 158 km. from Rishikesh is the site where a concrete dam (39 meters

high) is being constructed to divert the waters of the Bhagirathi into a tunnel.

Bhatwari

This is an important town, 25 km. from Gangori on the Rishikesh-Gangotri route. From here a bridle path coming from Gangotri, branches off to Shri Kedarnath.

Gangnani

There are hot water springs where one can take a bath for relaxation and rejuvenation.

Gangnani is located 14 km. from Bhatwari. 171 km. from Yamunotri and 191 km. from Rishikesh.

Sukhi

Sukhi is noted for its seasonal fruits—apples, apricots etc. are grown in abundance. Sukhi 18 km. from Gangnani.

Jhala

The journey down to Jhala from Sukhi is a dramatic and exciting descent of 305 m. in a distance of 7 km. The road crosses over to the left bank of the Bhagirathi and runs parallel to it for several kilometres.

Harsil

Harsil is 6 km. from Jhala and it is indeed a beautiful sylvan hamlet. Winding shady roads, swinging conifers, sun-kissed mountains and scintillating Bhagirathi.

Lanka

Lanka is a little halting place, 13 km. from Harsil, and at present it is the last motor head and all types of veh-

icles can go upto here only. The next station; Bhaironghati, is 3 km. away.

Bhaironghati

This 3 km. from Lanka is along a fascinating zig-zag path—lined with wooden fenceings and studded with beautiful high-altitude deodars.

From Bhaironghati, the pilgrimage to Gangotri, for a distance of 10 km. only.

GANGOTRI

WHERE THE GANGA DESCENDED ON EARTH

The tiny village of Gangotri (altitude 3140 m. above sea-level) is full of giant deodars and conifers. On the right bank of the Bhagirathi is the holy temple of Ganga, whilst on the left bank there are a few ashrams and dharmshalas. The Temple of Ganga was constructed by the Gorkha General, Amar Singh Thapa. It is said that the General appointed the pandas of Mukhwa, as the pujaris and donated the entire forest land between Mukhwa and Gangotri to the temple as goonth.

How Ganga Descended From Heaven

The great task of bringing the Ganga on earth started. Anshuman failed and so did his son Dilip, but the grandson Bhagirath was very determined, who meditated at Gangotri. After several years of intense meditation, the Ganga descended from Heaven and remained in suspense in the coils of Shiva's hair. Now

King Bhagirath meditated to propitiate Shiva. Shiva being pleased, released the Ganga as three streams—one of which came on earth in the form of the Bhagirathi. The Ganga's waters touched the ashes of the 60,000 sons and they rose to their eternal rest. The slab of stone on which King Bhagirath is believed to have meditated is called the Bhagirath Shila and is located near the Temple of Ganga.

When one takes a "holy dip" in the Ganga at Gangotri, it is believed that all sins are cleansed away with the waters of Ganga one is literally cleansed, soul and body.

Puja at Temple of Ganga

At Gangotri, Puja is offered to Gangaji. This is performed both in the temple and on the bank of the river. All puja are preceded by a holy bath in the river. The Pujaris are brahmins from the village of Mukhwa. Every year ten of them are selected in rotation to take charge of all the functions concerning the temple. Unlike Sri Badrinath, the office of Rawal does not exist here and the pujaris perform the duties of Rawal.

Temple Administration

The entire administration of the temple and the town is in the hands of a local committee made up of 5 members—the tehsildar of the area, the gram—pradhans of the villages Mukhwa and Dharali, and two leading sanyasis of Gangotri.

Gaurikund

Here at Gaurikund it is possible to romance a little

and imagine the Ganga falling from the hair coils of Lord Shiva into the Kund.

Dev Ghat

Just across the kedar Ganga—a small stream which meets the Bhagirathi at Gangotri—are the brilliant snow peaks known as Dev Ghat.

The Trek of Gaumukh

The trek from Gangotri starts with an easy climb along a route which is full of unexpected delights. Nine kilometers from Gangotri is beautiful Chirbasa, garbed in all its greenery.

GAUMUKH—The Glistening Glacier

Set in the heart of the Gangotri peaks, the Gaumukh Glacier offers variety in colour—in shades of blue and green, with glistening white floating icebergs is a common feature in June and July. The Gangotri Glacier, which lies at a height of 4255 m. above sea-level, is nearly 24 km, in length and 6 to 8 kms. in width.

The best time to visit Gaumukh is from June to September. The bridle path can be full of ice before June and after the second week of October.

RISHIKESH TO GANGOTRI

From Rishikesh to Dharasu, a distance of 120 kms. the road to Yamunotri and Gangotri is the same. From Dharasu, travellers have to follow the direct route to Gangotri via Uttarkashi.

Note : For description of route, please refer to Section—Rishikesh to Yamunotri (Rishikesh to Dharasu) and Section—Yamunotri to Gangotri (Dharasu to Gangotri).

RISHIKESH TO GANGOTRI HOW TO GET THERE

<i>Place</i>	<i>Altitude (m.)</i>	<i>Dist. (km.) (pt. to pt.)</i>	<i>Dist. (km.) (progressive)</i>
Rishikesh	340	—	—
Narendra Nagar	1067	16	16
Chamba	1524	46	62
Tehri	770	21	83
Dharasu	1036	37	120
Uttarkashi	1158	28	148
Gangori	1219	4	152
Maneri	1372	6	158
Bhatwari	1677	19	177
Gangnani	1982	14	191
Sukhi	2744	18	209
Jhala	2439	7	216
Harsil	2591	6	222
Lanka	2652	13	235
Bhaironghati	2652	3	238
Gangotri	3140	10	248

Rishikesh to Gangotri 248 kms. Motor Route

WHEN TO GO : May to June and September to October

Gangotri to Shri Kedarnath Via Shrinagar and Rudraprayag

Travellers going from Gangotri to Sri Kedarnath must return to Tehri via Uttarkashi and Dharasu. This journey of 165 kms. is along the banks of the Bhagirathi. At Dobata junction, 4 km. before Tehri,

one leaves the road going to Rishikesh and continues on to Tehri.

From Tehri there are two routes going to Sri Kedarnath :

Route 1. Tehri via Ghansali, Chirbatia, Tilwara to Shri Kedarnath—183 km.

Route 2. Tehri via Srinagar, Rudraprayag, Tilwara to Sri Kedarnath—178 km.

Tehri

The old romantic capital of Tehri Garhwal is located 165 km. from Gangotri and 83 km. from Rishikesh.

Gadolia

Gadolia is 17 km. from Tehri along a fairly good road.

Ghansali

18 km. from Gadolia, on a newly painted road, is the small hill town of Gansali. From here a road goes to Ghuttu.

Chirbatia

It is a continuous uphill journey, along a good road, for 31 km. to the beautiful mountain hamlet of Chirbatia.

Tilwara

From Chirbatia it is a continuous descent through a magnificent mountain country, a distance of 42 km.

ROUTE 2. TEHRI-SRINAGAR-RUDRAPRAYAG-TILWARA-SONEPRAYAG-SRI KEDARNATH

GANGOTRI TO SRI KEDARNATH

HOW TO GET THERE

<i>Place</i>	<i>Altitude (m.)</i>	<i>Dist. (km.) (pt. to pt.)</i>	<i>Dist. (km.) (progressive)</i>
Gangotri	3140	—	—
Bhaironghati	2652	10	10 Motor
Lanka	2652	3	13 "
Harsil	2591	13	26 "
Gangnani	1982	31	57 "
Bhatwari	1677	14	71 "
Uttarkashi	1158	29	100 "
Dharasu	1036	28	128 "
Tehri	770	37	165 "
Gadolia	770	17	182 "
Maletha	518	34	216 "
Kriti Nagar	520	3	219 "
Srinagar	572	6	225 "
Rudarpraya	610	34	259 "
Tilwara	915	9	268 "
Agastmuni	762	10	278 "
Kund	976	15	293 "
Guptakashi	1479	5	298 "
Nala Narayankoti		8	306 "
Phata	1601	11	317 "
Rampur	1646	9	326 "
Soneprayag	1829	3	329 "
Gaurikund	1982	5	334 "
Rambara	2591	7	336 On Foot
Garuchatti	3262	4	340 "
Sri Kedarnath	3583	3	343 "
Gangotri to Gauri Kund		334 km. (Motor)	
Gauri Kund to Sri Kedarnath		14 km. trek	

Maletha

17 km. from Tehri, the road to Srinagar branches at Gadolia. Then one travels along a good road to maletha, some 34 km. away.

Maletha is 3 km. short of Kirti Nagar. It is the junction where the road from Tehri meets the main highway going to Sri Kedarnath and Sri Badrinath.

Kirti Nagar

This small town was established by the former Maharaja Kirti Shah of Tehri Garhwal and it is located 3 km. from Maletha. It is here that the road crosses the Alaknanda and goes over the left bank. Only 6 km. from Kirti Nagar is the ancient town of Srinagar.

Srinagar

Srinagar is 60 km. from Tehri, 105 km. from Rishikesh and 118 km. from Sri Kedarnath.

Deoprayag

Deoprayag 70 km. from Rishikesh, is the first important town on this route. Here the Bhagirathi from Gaumukh and the Alkananda from Satopanth unite and become the sacred Ganga. Deoprayag is the birthplace of the Ganga and is considered next only to Prayagraj in its importance as a confluence.

From Deoprayag a flat road goes along the banks of the Alkananda for a distance of 35 km. to Srinagar. It passes through Bagwan, Maletha and Kirtinagar.

Note—For description of Srinagar and Rudraprayag, and routes to Srinagar, Rudraprayag to Tilwara and on to Sri Kedarnath please refer to Section—Rishikesh to Sri Kedarnath.

RISHIKESH TO KEDARNATH

HOW TO GET THERE

<i>Place</i>	<i>Altitude (m.)</i>	<i>Dist. (km.) (pt. to pt.)</i>	<i>Dist. (km.) (progressive)</i>
Rishikesh	340	—	—
Deoprayag	472	70	70 Motor
Srinagar	579	35	105 "
Rudraprayag	610	34	139 "
Tilwara	671	9	148 "
Agastmuni	762	10	158 "
Kund	976	19	173 "
Guptakashi	1479	5	178 "
Nala Narayankoti	3		181 "
Phata	1601	11	192 "
Rampur	1646	9	201 "
Soneprayag	1829	3	204 "
Gaurikund	1982	5	209 "
Rambara	2291	7	216 On Foot
Garurchatti	3262	4	220 "
Sri Kedarnath	3583	3	223 "
Rishikesh to Gauri Kund		209 km. motor	
Gauri Kund to Sri Kedarnath		14 km. trek	

WHEN TO GO : May to June and September to October

Srinagar

Srinagar is a developing town with schools, colleges a university and important offices. As it is very warm in summer the cool waters of the Alkananda are most inviting. Srinagar is 35 km. from Deoprayag, 105 km. from Rishikesh and 118 km. from Sri Kedarnath Excursions : From Srinagar a road branches off to Pauri and

Kotdawara. Pauri is a hill station about 29 km. from Srinagar, and Kotdawara is a railhead approximately 108 km. from Pauri.

Rudraprayag

It is an enjoyable drive of 34 km. from Srinagar to the small, but important town of Rudraprayag which is situated at the confluence of the Mandakini, flowing from Kedarnath, and the Alaknanda coming from Badrinath.

Here also, is the ancient Temple of Rudranath.

Tilwara

From Rudraprayag the road to Sri Kedarnath passes through a tunnel, and then goes along the banks of the Mandakini to the first important town in the valley—Tilwara. The road coming from Tehri meets the main road going from Rishikesh to Sri Kedarnath at Tilwara.

Agastmuni

Agastmuni—at a distance of ten km. from Tilwara. The sage Agastmuni, who meditated here, is worshipped in the local temple of Agastya.

Kund

Kund is located fifteen km. from Agastmuni and 173 km. from Rishikesh. It is at the junction of two roads, one going to Sri Kedarnath via Guptakashi, and other to Chamoli via Ukhimath.

Guptakashi

Perched at an altitude of 1479 m. above sea-level and just 5 km. from Kund, is the scenic and legendary town

of Guptakashi, which is an important place on the routes to Sri Kedarnath and Madmaheshwar.

The pandas of Sri Kedarnath live in the villages near Guptakashi.

Gate System

As the road from Guptakashi to Soneprayag is narrow and unmetalled, the traffic is regulated by one-way system, which is popularly known as the "gate system".

Nala

Only 1½ km. from Guptakashi, Nala is a small place where the Goddess Durga is worshipped in the form of Lalita Devi.

Narayankoti

Narayankoti is one & half km. from Nala.

Phata

The road from Guptakashi to Phata, and on to Sonprayag, had not been black-topped at yet. Although it needs a lot of improvement, it is suitable for all types of vehicles—except in the rainy season. Phata is situated 192 km. from Rishikesh.

Rampur

23 km. from Guptakashi, one passes through an area of majestic and untamed scenery. For several years, this village was the last motorhead on Sri Kedarnath route.

Soneprayag

This little village, is located at the confluence of the

Mandakini and the Son-Ganga.

Gauri Kund

Gaurikund is 5 km. from Soneprayag and 209 km. from Rishikesh. Here is an ancient temple dedicated to the Goddess Gauri, which houses the metallic idols of Gauri and Mahadev.

The religious texts say that the Goddess Parvati meditated here for a considerable time to win a consort in Lord Shive. The cosmic couple were wed at Triyuginarain.

Near the temple there are two tanks of water—one is hot and the other is cold. The hot water comes out of a sulphur rock and some of it falls into the Mandakini flowing nearby.

THE TREK TO SRI KEDARNATH.

Rambara

The 7 km. trek from Gaurikund to Rambara passes through dense green forests, and near several water falls. From Rambara, it is a very steep climb—a distance of 57 km.—to Sri Kedarnath and pilgrims must check and allow enough time to go straight through to Shri Kedarnath without stopping. If you arrive late at Rambara, stay overnight and continue on to Sri Kedarnath in the morning.

Garur Chatti

2 km. from Rambara onwards the scenery changes dramatically. The surrounding mountains are steep, stark and generally bare, and small plants—cacti, orchids and flowers of different colours can be seen along the route.

KEDARNATH

THE ABODE OF SHIVA

It is an easy and enjoyable 3 km. trek from Garurchatti Sri Kedarnath—it is not steep, just a gentler rise. The Temple of Sri Kedarnath can be seen from a point half km. from Garurchatti. It's an entrancing sight, the temple set in an area of rich grassy land with towering white mountains, mantled with snow, in the background. The devotees are overcome with emotion and prostrate themselves before this vision—at last they have reached their goal and a dream has become a reality. This is the famous Puri of Shiveji. It is situated at a height of 11,500 feet on a marshy plain, on the slope of the Himalayas. There is a Lingam of Shiveji. The pilgrims have to return back upto Nala Chatti, 40 km. and then take the Badrinath road.

History of Kedarnath

After the war of Kurukshetra, the Pandvas set out on a yatra to Varanasi in order to be blessed by Lord Shiva and be absolved from the sin of killing their own brothers—the kauravas. Lord Shiva, unwilling to give darshan to the Pandavas, fled from Kashi to Uttarakhand and lived incognito in Guptakashi.

On being detected by the Pandvas, Shiva went to Kedarnath, but the Pandavas followed him. He assumed the form of a bull and started grazing amongst the cattle, but even then could not escape detection by the Pandavas. At dusk, when it was time for the cattle to return home, Bhim (of gigantic stature, great cour-

age and strength) stretched his legs across the mountains (standing on either side of the Kedarnath Valley) in order to identify Shiva. All the cattle passed under his legs except Shiva, whom Bhim noticed. As Bhim bent down to catch hold of him. Shiva sank into the earth and only his back portion (the hump) was taken in Bhim's hand. Shiva being pleased with the determination of the Pandavas, exonerated them from their sin, gave them darshan and requested them to worship his hump. It is from that date the hump of Shiva worshipped in the Temple of Shri Kedarnath—in the conical Shiva pinda form.

PANCH KEDAR—(as described in Padma Purana)

1. Kedarnath—at Kedar is the hinder part of the Buffalo (Shiva changed himself into the form of a buffalo. when Bhim chased him).

2. Maddhyamaheshvra—At Maddhyamaheshvra the Nabhi or the middle part of the buffalo-Shiva. This place is 21 km. from Ukhimath (via Kalimatha).

3. Tungnath—At Tungnath is the Bahu or hand of the buffalo-Shiva. It is just on the way to Badrinath and 37 km. from Ukhimatha.

4. Rudranath—At Rudranath is the Mukh or the mouth of the buffalo-Shiva. It is about 19 km. from Mandal Chatti.

5. Kalpeshwar—At Kalpeshwar is the Jata or the hair of the head of the buffalo-Shiva. This place is just opposite to Helang Chatti at about 8.7 km. from Helang, on other side of the Alaknanda.

KEDARNATH TO BADRINATH

When going from Sri Kedarnath to Sri Badrinath it is necessary to return to Kund, from where there are two routes going to Sri Badrinath—via Rudraprayag and via Ukhimath.

The first route is the most direct, but less pictures que as one does not have extensive views of the Himalayas—it is via Rudaraprayag, which is the junction of the roads to the Shrines of Sri Kedarnath and Sri Badrinath.

Note : For description of route—Sri Kedarnath to Rudrapraya please refer to Section—Rishikesh to Sri Kedarnath.

Rudraprayag

Rudraprayag is situated at the confluence of the Mandakni and the Alaknanda. It is 84 km. from Sri Kedarnath and 159 km. from Sri Badrinath.

Note : For description of Rudraprayag please refer to Section—Rishikesh to Sri Kedarnath.

Gholtir

Ten kilometres from Rudraprayag and 149 km. from Sri Badrinath is a little place known as Gholtir. The border district of Chamoli begins from here.

Gauchar

Gauchar, which is 10 km. from Gholtir, has the largest area of flat land in the hills. Once a year a big trade fair attract thousands of visitors from all over Uttarakhand to Gauchar.

KEDARNATH TO BADRINATH VIA RUDRAPRAYAG

<i>Place</i>	<i>Altitude (m.)</i>	<i>Dist. (km.) (pt. to pt.)</i>	<i>Dist. (km.) (progressive)</i>
Sri Kedarnath	3583	—	—
Garurchatti	3265	3	3
Rambara	2591	4	7
Gaurikund	1982	7	14 On Fo
Soneprayag	1829	5	19 Moto
Rampur	1646	3	22 "
Phata	1601	9	31 "
Narayankoti Nala		11	42 "
Guptakashi	1479	3	45 "
Kund	976	5	50 "
Agastmuni	762	15	65 "
Tilwara	671	10	75 "
Rudraprayag	610	9	84 "
Gholtir	645	10	94 "
Gauchar	790	10	104 "
Karanprayag	795	11	115 "
Nandprayag	914	22	137 "
Chamoli	1069	10	147 "
Birahi	1100	8	155 "
Pipalkoti	1311	9	164 "
Garur Ganga	1372	5	169 "
Tangani	1677	6	175 "
Helang	1524	6	181 "
Joshimath	1890	14	195 "
Vishnuprayag	1372	10	205 "
Govind Ghat	1829	10	215 "
Pandukeshwar	1829	4	219 "
Hanumanchatti	2286	9	228 "
Dev Darshani	3101	13	241 "
Sri Badrinath	3110	2	243 "
Sri Kedarnath to Gaurikund		14 km. trek	
Gourikund to Sri Badrinath		229 km. motor	

Karnaprayag

Attractively situated, 11 km. from Gaucher where the Pindar, flowing from the Pinari Glacier, and the Alaknanda merge, is the town of Karnaprayag. A temple dedicated to the Goddess Umadevi, is located here.

At Karnaprayag there are the Sub-Divisional Headquarters, a Government Intermediate College, Post and Telegraph Office and a branch of State Bank of India. The roads coming from Ranikhet and Kausani meet here.

Nandprayag

Nandprayag is a picturesque and photogenic hamlet set in scenic surroundings at the confluence of the Alaknanda and the Mandakini, just 22 km. from Karnaprayag.

Chamoli

The pretty little town of Chamoli is situated on the banks of the Alaknanda. This first route from Sri Kedarnath meets the second route via Ukhimath at Chamoli.

Unfortunately there are no good places for a night-stay. Chamoli is 10 km. from Nandprayag, 147 km. from Sri Kedarnath and 96 km. from Sri Badrinath.

Birahi

This delightful fishing spot is located at the confluence of the Alaknanda and the Birahi Ganga, 8 km. from Chamoli.

Pipalkoti

Pipalkoti is a busy town cradled in the lap of lush green mountains and terraced fields. There are simple and clean eating places, open chattis and dharmshalas for a night rest which offer an intimate glimpse of the warmhearted hill folk.

Garur Ganga

From Pipalkoti, one travels 5 km. to a small chatti, called Garur Ganga, located on the bank of small rivulet of the same name.

Tangani

This is a quaint chatti located 6 km. from Garur Ganga and 175 km. from Sri Kedarnath.

Helang

Helang, 6 km. from Tangani, is a small chatti on the way to Joshimath.

Joshimath

(Jyotirmath, Adiguru Shankracharya's Seat)

The town of Joshimath 14 km. from Helang is the most important town on the Sri Badrinath route and it is a major halting station.

Jyotirmath, the Adiguru's seat, is worshipped by hundreds of pilgrims each day and in the evening Shankracharya delivers the holy pravachan. It is important that pilgrims pay a visit to Jyotirmath—the first math of the Adiguru who established the Shrine of Badrinathji.

Vishnuprayag

At a distance of 10 km. from Joshimath and 205 km. from Sri Kedarnath, one comes to a little place called Vishnuprayag, where the dancing waters of the Alaknanda and the Dhauli Ganga join together.

Govind Ghat

On travelling 10 km. from Vishnuprayag, one arrives in a small centre called Govind Ghat. From here a zig-zag bridle path trails its way for 15 km. to Ghangaria (Govind Dham), which is the base for the treks to the Valley of Flowers and the lake of Sri Hemkund Sahib.

Pandukeshwar

It is said that King Pandu, the father of the five Pandaves, lived here during the last few days of his life and attained nirvana.

Pandukeshwar is 4 km. from Govind Ghat, 219 km. from Sri Kedarnath and 24 km. from Sri Badrinath.

Hanumanchatti

Hanumanchatti is 9 km. from Pandukeshwar and it is a small old-fashioned chatti, where a small Temple of Hanumanji is located. It is believed that Hanumanji meditated here and Lord Badrinathji being pleased with him, blessed him with unusual powers and strength. Puri Badrinath is 7 km. from here.

SRI BADRINATH

The journey is done and the barriers, have fallen. The Dham, the aim of your journey, the reward of it all.

“The paradise on earth”, Badrinath is situated at the height of 10,248 feet above sea level. Surrounded by the snow covered peaks of Himalayas, Sri Badrinath is situated on the right bank of river Alaknanda, which is always praying lord Badrinath in its roaring voice. The hot water tank, or the Taptakund is the boon of nature. Pilgrims take bath in this tank. Other hot water tanks are “Narad Kund” and ‘Surya Kund’, P.W.D.I.H Temple Committee—Guest House and Dharmshala are available.

The Temple of Sri Badrinath

The idol of Lord Badrivishal is made of black stoneshaligram. The details are not well-defined—perhaps the result of weathering, when thrown in the Narad Kund for several years. The Lord is seated in a ‘padmasan’ posture. Opinions are still divided as to the origin of the idol. The popular belief is that when the Buddhists desecrated the Hindu Temple, they converted it into a Buddhist Shrine and threw the idol into the Narad Kund. Others believe that after the conversion of the temple, the Buddhists enshrined the statue of Lord Buddha there and during the Hindu renaissance the statue of Buddha was thrown in the Narad Kund, and it was restored by Adiguru as the idol of Vishnu. The fact that the deity is seated in a padmasan form, a very common form of Buddhists’ icons, supports the latter belief, Lord Buddha, in such posture, is called Bodhisatva.

According to Hindu mythology, Buddha is the 9th incarnation of Lord Vishnu and therefore Budha may be considered another form of Badrinathji.

Hinduism allows the maximum freedom in matters of faith and worship. Hinduism does not rest in the acceptance of any particular form of worship. The philosophy of Hinduism is not meant for intellectual curiosity and vain speculation. It is a guide to the path of life. It spiritualises human existence. The dharamadhikari, or the religious preacher of the temple explains to the devotees that they can see the idol of Lord Badrinathji in whatsoever form they wish. He is Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, Kali, Mahabir, Guru and Buddha—almighty, all pervading and all in one.

The temple is divided into three parts—the garbhgriha, the darshan mandap and the sabha mandap.

The idol of Lord Badrivishal is seated in the innermost part—the garbh—griha. The canopy is covered with a sheet of gold, and this was an offering made by Queen Ahalyabai. The darshan mandap is a small rectangular area where pujas are performed. It can only accommodate a few people. The sabha mandap is an outer hall where the devotees stand for darshan and it is only possible for a few people to attend it.

Puja

At Badrinath, different kinds of Pujas are performed on behalf of individuals. Every puja must be preceded by a 'holy dip' in the taptakund.

Some of the special morning pujas are—abhishek, mahabhishek, Srimad-Bhagwat and Gita path.

Some of the special evening pujas are—arti and govind. The morning pujas must be booked the previous day and the evening Puja can be booked in the afternoon.

Darshan

Darshan of Lord Badrivishal is available from the sabha mandap all the time the temple is open. The temple committee posts volunteers at various points to organise the large crowds. The fragrance of the Himalayan—shrubs permeates the air. The chanting of vedic hymns by the pujari and the pandits, together with the chiming of bells creates a heavenly atmosphere—a feeling of complete surrender to the Lord.

One leaves the temple blessed, happy and fulfilled because at last a cherished dream has come true.

TIMINGS for darshan at the temple—

Morning—Opens at 6.30 hrs. with shubh prabhakar and closes at 13.00 hrs.

Afternoon—Opens at 16.00 hrs. and closes at 21.00 hrs. after the divine song—Geet-govind.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Gate system—

There is a gate system from Joshimath to Sri Badrinath. The first gate is at 06.30 hrs. and the last at 16.30 hrs. The winding road is well-maintained and sharply ascends and descends.

RISHIKESH TO BADRINATH

<i>Place</i>	<i>Altitude (m.)</i>	<i>Dist. (km.) (pt. to pt.)</i>	<i>Dist. (km.) (progressive)</i>
Rishikesh	340	—	—
Deoprayag	472	70	70
Srinagar	579	35	105
Rudraprayag	610	34	139
Gholtir	645	10	149
Gauchar	790	10	159
Karnaprayag	795	11	170
Nandprayag	914	22	192
Chamoli	1069	10	202
Birahi	1100	8	210
Pipalkori	1311	9	219
Garur Ganga	1372	5	224
Tangani	1677	6	230
Helang	1524	6	236
Joshimath	1890	14	250
Vishnuprayag	1372	10	260
Govind Ghat	1829	10	270
Pandukeshwar	1829	4	274
Hanumanchatti	2286	9	283
Deo Darshani	3101	13	296
Sri Badrinath	3110	2	298

The route from Rishikesh to Sri Badrinath has been described in two sections.

Rishikesh to Rudraprayag is described in section—
Rishikesh to Sri Kedarnath.

Rudraprayag to Sri Badrinath is described in section
Sri Kedarnath to Sri Badrinath.

Rudraprayag is the junction for the pilgrimage to the holy Shrines of Sri Kedarnath and Sri Badrinath.

HEMKUND SAHIB

*Hemkund Parvat Hai Jahan
Sapat Shring Sobhit Hai Tahan.
Sapat Shring Tahan Nam Kahava.
Pandu Raj Jahan Yog Kamaya.
Tahan hum Adhik Tapasya Sadhi.
Mahan Kal Kalika Aradhi.
Ehi Bidhi Karat Tapaya Bhaya.
Dwai Te Ek Rup Hwai Gayo.*

Situated at a height of 15,200 ft. above sea level, picturesque surroundings, as the Shabad of Gurus states, the pious place is sheltered by seven snow cl peaks of gigantic mounts—Hemkund Parvat.

The very name Hemkund indicates the presence of tank of snow there.

Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji, in his former life by the name Rishi Medhasa (The famous Rishi of Durga Saptashati of Markandeya Purana) had selected this place for penance, where the king Pandu of Hastinapur had also been practising Yoga.

Rishi Medhasa, While meditating found an inspiration by—

*Jahan Tahan Tum Dharam Bitharo.
Dusht Dokhiyan Pakar Pachharo.*

And obeying, the Almighty, taking rebirth unto the

earth by the name Gobind Singh founded Khalsa, the Sikh Religion.

Yatra Time—For Hemkund is from mid of August to September last.

RISHIKESH TO JOSHIMATH 228 Km.

From Rishikesh motor bus leads upto Joshimath as mentioned in Badri-Yatra.

Note—For Hemkund yatra, the pilgrims are required to have their permits from Joshimath.

JOSHIMATH TO GOBIND GHAT 20 Km.

The journey is straight and easily accessible, can also be completed by Bus or Car, if available.

Gobind Ghat—There is a beautiful Gurudwara with the management of lodging and Langar (food). There is also a Forest's House.

GOBIND GHAT TO GHANGARIA 15 Km.

The place is situated at a height of 10,500 feet and the journey is to be completed on foot and in groups, as far as possible. After crossing a bridge and an ascent of 5 km. there is Pungaun, where one can get a light refreshment. Further is the dense forest with a difficult ascent of 4 km. upto Bayunagar village. Here is Post Office. New Kalgidhar Dharamshala (Ghangariya) is at a distance of 5 km. from this place.

Ghangaria—There is a big Forest—Bungalow and a grand Gurudwara equipped with lodging and Langar. The charming beauty of the place is increased more with the long Deodar trees. The cold is enough and the

blankets etc. are supplied there from Gurudwara.

GHANGARIYA TO HEMKUND 6 Km.

Hemkund is 6 km. on the left bridle path from Ghangariya. The pilgrims are required to carry with them a water bottle and some dry fruits, as the whole journey is a difficult ascent. The pilgrims are also advised to be equipped with hill sticks, rubber sole shoes and woollen clothes, as they have to travel through the snow and there is plenty of cold.

HEMKUND

A Gurudwara and Lakshman Temple is situated at a height of 15,200 feet above sea level. Surrounding the place are 7 snow-clad peaks of lofty mountains.

The beautiful lake of clear and sweet water is full of Lotus flowers in the centre and the sweet blooming variety of grassy fields all around the Lake, depict an unrivalled sublime beauty of magnificent grandeur.

GHANGARIYA TO FLOWER VALLEY

One foot path from Ghangariya leads to Hemkund and the another to Flower Valley—4 km. From Ghangariya and 19 km. from Gobind Ghat and is at an altitude of 3352 m. (12000 ft.)

<i>Place</i>	<i>Altitude (m.)</i>	<i>Dist. (km.) (pt. to pt.)</i>	<i>Accommodation</i>
Joshimath	1890		Rest House, Hotels
Gobind Ghat	1829	20 motor	Gurudwara, Log Cabin
Pulna	1920	3 trek	—
Bhyundar	2439	7 trek	—
Ghangaria	3049	5 trek	Gurudwara, Rest House
Sri Hemkund Sahib	4329	5 trek	Gurudwara

Valley of Flowers

Govind Ghat, which is 270 km. from Rishikesh and 20 km. from Joshimath is the motorhead for the Valley of Flowers. From Govind Ghat to the Valley of Flowers it is a 19 km. trek. Porters and ponies are available for this trek. The trek is one of varied scenic beauty. After crossing the suspension bridge over the Alaknanda, the zig-zag mountain—path, with the gurgling Laxman Ganga stream as a constant companion, trails its way through dense vegetation, whispering forests and by panoramic views of the lovely Kak Bhusandi Valley to the pretty hamlet of Ghangariya (Govind Dham), which is the base for the Valley of Flowers, nestled amidst the gaint deodars. As the path from Ghangariya gradually ascends to the Valley of Flowers, glaciers, snow bridges, alpine flowers and wildlife appear at intervals along the route of this 4 km. trek.

<i>Place</i>	<i>Altitude (m.)</i>	<i>Dist. (km.) (pt. to pt.)</i>	<i>Accommodation</i>
Joshimath	1890	—	Hotels, Rest House
Govind Ghat	1829	20 Motor	Gurudwara, Log Cabin
Pulna	1920	3 trek	
Bhyundar	2439	"	
Ghangana	3049	"	Gurudwara, Rest House
Valley of Flowers	3352 (low- est point)	"	
	3658 (high- est point)	"	

DISTANCES OF IMPORTANT PLACES

Rishikesh to Badrinath Way		Rishikesh to Kedarnath Way	
<i>Place</i>	<i>Distance (km.)</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Distance (km.)</i>
Rishikesh	0	Rishikesh	0
Devprayag	70	Devprayag	70
Srinagar	105	Srinagar	105
Rudraprayag	139	Rudraprayag	139
Karnaprayag	170	Guptakashi	178
Chamoli	202	Soneprayag	204
Pipalkoti	219	Kedarnath	223
Joshimath	250		
Badrinath	298		

Rishikesh to Yamunotri Way		Rishikesh to Gangotri Way	
<i>Place</i>	<i>Distance (km.)</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Distance (km.)</i>
Rishikesh	0	Rishikesh	0
Chamba	63	Narendra Nagar	16
Tihri	83	Chamba	63
Dharasu	120	Tihri	83
Barkot	175	Dharasu	120
Hanumanchatti	209	Uttarkashi	148
Yamunotri	222	Lanka	235
		Gangotri	248

Kedarnath to Badrinath Way		Yamunotri to Gangotri Way	
<i>Place</i>	<i>Distance (km.)</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Distance (km.)</i>
Kedranath	0	Yamunotri	0
Soneprayag	19	Hanumanchatti	13
Guptakashi	45	Barkot	47
Rudraprayag	84	Dharasu	102
Karnaprayag	115	Uttarkashi	128
Chamoli	147	Lanka	215
Pipalkoti	164	Gangotri	228
Joshimath	195		
Badrinath	243		

Gangotri to Kedranath Way		Kotdwar to Badrinath Way	
<i>Place</i>	<i>Distance (km.)</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Distance (km.)</i>
Gangotri	0	Kotdwar	0
Lanka	13	Dugadda	15
Uttarkashi	100	Satpuli	54
Dharasu	128	Pauri	106
Tihri	135	Srinagar	135
Srinagar	225	Rudraprayag	168
Rudraprayag	259	Karnaprayag	199
Guptakashi	298	Nandprayag	219
Soneprayag	324	Chamoli	229
Kedarnath	343	Pipalkoti	246
		Joshimath	286
		Badrinath	330

Almora to Badrinath Way

(Via Kausani-Gwaldam)

Almora	0
Koshi	13
Holbagh	19
Someshwar	42
Kousani	52
Garur	68
Gwaldam	97
Karnaprayag	166
Nandprayag	186
Chamoli	196
Pipalkoti	213
Joshimath	244
Badrinath	288

MUSSOORIE TO KEDARNATH

(Via Tihri, Ghansali and Chirbatia)

<i>Place</i>	<i>Height (m).</i>	<i>Distance (km.)</i>
Mussoorie	1921	0
Dhanaulti	2258	26
Chamba	1524	55
Tihri	770	76
Godalia	770	93
Ghansali	976	111
Chirbatia	2134	142
Tilwara	671	184
Agastmuni	762	194
Kund	976	209
Guptakashi	1479	214
Narayan Kot	1500	219
Phata	1601	228
Rampur	1646	237
Soneprayag	1829	240
Gorkund	1922	245
Ramwada	2591	252
Gaturchatti	3262	256
Sn Kedarnath	3500	

MUSSOORIE TO BADRINATH

(Via Tihri, Srinagar and Rudraprayag)

<i>Place</i>	<i>Height (m).</i>	<i>Distance (km.)</i>
Mussoorie	1921	0
Dhanualti	2258	26
Chamba	1524	55
Tihri	770	76
Srinagar	579	136
Rudraprayag	610	170
Gholtir	645	180
Gauchar	790	190
Karnaprayag	795	201
Nandprayag	914	221
Chamoli	1069	231
Birahi	1100	239
Pipalkoti	1311	248
Garur Ganga	1372	253
Helang	1524	265
Joshimath	1890	279
Vishnuprayag	1372	289
Pandkeshwar	1829	303
Devdarshani	3101	325
Sri Badrinath	3110	327

NAINITAL TO BADRINATH

(Via Ranikhet)

<i>Place</i>	<i>Height (m).</i>	<i>Distance (km.)</i>
Nainital	1829	0
Bhuvali	1800	11
Ranikhet	1829	59
Dwarahat	1313	97
Choukhatia	1002	118
Pandkhal	1750	138
Gairsain	1313	156
Karnaprayag	795	212
Nandprayag	914	232
Chamoli	1069	242
Pipalmoti	1311	261
Joshimath	1890	292
Pandkeshwar	1829	316
Hanumanchatti	2286	325
Sri Badrinath	3110	340

NAINITAL TO BADRINATH

(Via Almora)

<i>Place</i>	<i>Height (m).</i>	<i>Distance (km.)</i>
Nainital	1829	0
Bhuvali	1800	11
Almora	1646	65
Kausani	1890	116
Baijnath	1108	135
Gwaldam	1940	149
Karnaprayag	765	218
Nandprayag	914	240
Chamoli	1069	250
Birahi	1100	258
Pipalkoti	1131	267
Garur Ganga	1372	272
Tangni	1677	278
Helang	1524	284
Joshimath	1890	298
Vishnuprayag	1372	308
Govindghat	1829	318
Pandkeshwar	1829	322
Hanumanchatti	2286	331
Tri Badrinath	3110	346

SOME FAMOUS MOUNTAIN PEAKS

<i>Name of the Peak</i>	<i>Height (m.)</i>
Nandadevi	7818
Kamet	7758
Mana	7274
Choukhamba	7140
Trishul	7122
Dunagiri	7068
Panchchuli	6905
Changbang	6866
Nandakot	6863
Marigthum	6857
Gangotri	6672
Panwahidhar	6665
Shivling	6544
Neelkanth	6597
Kirtistambh	6402
Banderpooneh	6317
Nandaghoonthi	6314
Swargarohini	6258
Hanuman	6076